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Governor Douglas Receives National Award for Improving Health Care Quality

NCQA recognizes Governor's health reform initiatives

Washington, D.C. – Governor Jim Douglas was honored last night with a 2010 Health Quality Award from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Governor Douglas was recognized for his work to improve Vermont's health care system through a focus on chronic disease prevention and management resources. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius was on hand and provided the keynote address.

"This is a tremendous recognition of the work we have done in Vermont to provide quality, affordable coverage to more people," said the Governor. "Prevention is key to reining in costs and the Blueprint for Health as been instrumental in improving our health quality standards and is a model for the nation."

In 2003, Douglas launched the Blueprint for Health to focus health care in his state on preventing illness and complications, rather than reacting to health emergencies. He signed a comprehensive package of health reforms in 2006 designed to expand access to coverage, improve the quality and performance of the health care system and contain costs.

"Governor Douglas' leadership has produced better health care for residents of Vermont," said NCQA President Margaret E. O'Kane. "The focus the Governor has put on prevention makes Vermont an encouraging model for improving health care on the national level."

Each year, NCQA presents Health Quality Awards to individuals and organizations that highlight the need for—and drive—health care improvement. Past recipients include Director of the Office of Management and Budget Peter Orszag, California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Secretary Sebelius and actress Mary Tyler Moore and The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Governor Douglas joined the following individuals and organizations also receiving 2010 Health Quality Awards:

- ❖ Karen Davis – Davis is the president of The Commonwealth Fund, a national philanthropy engaged in independent research on health and social policy issues. She is a nationally recognized economist and advocate for an affordable, high-performance health care system for all Americans.
- ❖ Peter Pronovost, MD, PhD – Pronovost is a practicing anesthesiologist and teacher, researcher, critical care physician and international patient safety leader. He is also a professor at Johns Hopkins University. In 2001, he developed a checklist to address line infection, a common complication that may occur when a catheter is inserted into the body. In 2003, he established the Quality and Safety Research Group to advance the science of safety.
- ❖ The Greater New Orleans Community Organizations, the Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum and the Louisiana Public Health Institute are being recognized for their work in the wake of Hurricane Katrina to develop and implement a community-based care network focused on primary care and integrated behavioral health for residents of New Orleans.
- ❖ Governor Edward Rendell (D-Pennsylvania) – Governor Rendell is currently serving his second term as Pennsylvania's 45th Governor. In 2007, he launched Prescription for Pennsylvania, a multi-pronged effort designed to improve the health care of all Pennsylvanians by making care more efficient and cost-effective. This initiative includes the nation's largest demonstration of the Patient-Centered Medical Home collaborative.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2010, NCQA is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. NCQA accredits and certifies a wide range of health care organizations. It also recognizes clinicians and practices in key areas of performance. NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) is the most widely used performance measurement tool in health care. NCQA is committed to providing health care quality information for consumers, purchasers, health care providers and researchers.

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